

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 10624 231225Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 ACDA-07 DHA-02

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 173

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY OBONN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

USMISSION GENEVA

DIA WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

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BELGRADE ALSO FOR USDEL CSCE

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SOPN, UR, US

SUBJECT: FIRST SOVIET PRESS TREATMENT OF PRESIDENT'S CHARLESTON

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 10624 231225Z

SUMMARY: PRAVDA DULY 23 CARRIES FIRST REPORTAGE IN

SOVIET PRESS OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S CHARLESTON, S.C. SPEECH.

THE JULY 22 TASS-WASHINGTON PIECE IS LOW-KEY, SELECTIVELY

FACTUAL, MEASURED, AND WITHOUT MAJOR COMMENT. DESPITE

SOME CARPING, THE INITIAL COVERAGE LEAVES SOVIET

OPTIONS OPEN REGARDING OVERALL RESPONSE, AND MEDIA

CAUTION DOUBTLESS REFLECTS RECOGNITION THAT PRESIDENT'S SPEECH REQUIRES CAREFUL CONSIDERATION BY TOP LEADERSHIP BEFORE DEFINITIVE STANCE IS TAKEN. END SUMMARY.

1. JULY 23 PRAVDA PRINTS ONLY A JULY 22 TASS-WASHINGTON REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S JULY 21 SPEECH ON SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS (ASSUME DEPARTMENT HAS FULL FBIS TEXT). THE FIRST HALF OF THE PIECE IS A RESUME OF SOME OF THE MAIN POINTS IN THE SPEECH WITHOUT ANY COMMENT. IT HIGHLIGHTS THE PRESIDENT'S PASSAGES ON THE ERROR OF BASING LONG-RANGE POLICIES ON THE MOOD OF THE MOMENT; THE PROFOUND DIFFERENCES IN THE BELIEFS OF OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS; THE REAL COMPETITION WHICH EXISTS; AND THE LACK OF A BASIS FOR COMPLETE MUTUAL TRUST THUS FORCING US TO REACH AGREEMENTS ANCHORED IN ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST SUPPLEMENTED BY THE YEARNING FOR PEACE. TASS REPLAYS THE BREZHNEV QUOTE THAT DETENTE WILL SUCCEED AND THAT MANKIND WILL GO INTO THE 21ST CENTURY IN PEACE.

2. IN TREATING SPECIFIC ISSUES IN THE SECOND PART OF THE TASS ARTICLE, THERE IS SOME NEGATIVE COMMENT. MOST INTERESTINGLY THE PRESIDENT'S REAFFIRMATION OF HIS HUMAN RIGHTS POSITION IS MENTIONED BRIEFLY WITH NO COMMENT OFFERED. HOWEVER, AFTER NOTING THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS ON SALT TASS ADDS THAT THE "FACTS DEMONSTRATE" THAT THE U.S. IS TRYING FOR UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE AND NOT EQUALITY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 10624 231225Z

AND UNDIMINISHED SECURITY. ALSO, WHILE MENTIONING CARTER'S REMARKS ON THE DESIRE FOR SALT, CW, NON-PROLIFERATION, AND ARMS TRANSFERS AGREEMENT, TASS CLAIMS THE PRESIDENT "AVOIDED" THE CRUISE MISSILE, NEUTRON BOMB, AND "OTHER NEW SYSTEMS" OF MASS DESTRUCTION WHICH COMPLICATE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT'S GOALS. TASS'S FINAL LINE IS THE COMMENT THAT "AS IS KNOWN" THE IMPROVEMENT IN SOVIET-MAERICAN RELATIONS" DEPENDS IN MANY WAYS ON THE DIRECTION IN WHICH U.S. POLICY DEVELOPS FURTHER."

3. COMMENT: THE TASS PIECE IS LOW-KEY, SELECTIVELY FACTUAL AND CONTAINS LITTLE COMMENTARY OF NOTE. IT IS NOTABLE THAT COMMENTARY DID NOT HIGHLIGHT PRESIDENT'S REMARKS ON HUMAN RIGHTS FOR CONDEMNATION. IN GENERAL THE DELAY IN PUBLISHING EVEN THIS RELATIVELY BLAND RESPONSE AND THE LACK OF ANY SUBSTANTIAL COMMENTARY THUS FAR INDICATES THAT THE SOVIETS ARE BEING DELIBERATE IN THEIR RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS. THIS IS IN MARKED CONTRAST TO MANY OF THEIR RECENT COMMENTS ON U.S. POLICIES WHICH HAVE QUICKLY AND STRIDENTLY ATTACKED THE PRESIDENT.

4. PART OF THE DELAY MAY BE EXPLAINED BY THE FACT THAT BREZHNEV IS VACATIONING IN THE CRIMEA AND THAT ANY MAJOR MEDIA RESPONSE REQUIRES HIS PERSONAL APPROVAL. EVEN MORE IMPORTANT, DELAY IS PROBABLY RESULT OF SOVIET RECOGNITION THAT PRESIDENT'S SPEECH IS A MAJOR MOVE WHICH MUST BE GIVEN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION BEFORE A DEFINITIVE RESPONSE IS FORMULATED. INITIAL COVERAGE PRESERVES THE OPTION TO PLAY IT EITHER WAY, BUT BY AVOIDING STRIDENCY OF RECENT PRESS COMMENTARY IT PAVES WAY FOR ACCEPTANCE OF SPEECH AS OLIVE BRANCH IF THIS SHOULD BE ULTIMATE DECISION. TOON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
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Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1768438
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FIRST SOVIET PRESS TREATMENT OF PRESIDENT'S CHARLESTON ADDRESS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
TAGS: SOPN, UR, US, (CARTER, JIMMY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/39d1f264-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009